

A FLEMISH OPERA PRODUCED

"PRINCESSE D'AUBERGE" AT THE MANHATTAN.

A Large Audience Received the Opera With Great Cordiality—The Work Excellently Mounted and the Carnival Scene Makes an Immediate Success.

"Princesse D'Auberge," opera in three acts and four scenes, book by Nestor de Tiers, music by Jan Blockx, was produced for the first time in the United States at the Manhattan Opera House last night. The occasion was made one of festive spirit by the demonstrative patrons of Mr. Hammerstein's entertainments. They filled the auditorium with their presence and their plaudits. The casual observer would have concluded that the new opera had achieved a grand success, but as the present season is almost at its end it will be wise to wait till next winter before arriving at final opinions.

Meanwhile, be it noted that the chronicler of theatrical incidents is not required to guess whether a new work has gained a popular success. Theatrical managers all believe that to be his business, but it is in truth only the manager's. All that concerns the chronicler is the artistic quality of the creation, and in the case of "Princesse D'Auberge" this is not a matter which need bring him nervous days or sleepless nights. Mr. Blockx was apparently not concerned about building a masterpiece of art, but about writing a good stage opera, and in this he has succeeded.

Take a weak minded youth with a high pitched voice and a talent for composition, a young woman with the utterance of glacial quality, flashing eyes and teeth of Carrara marble, another young woman of tearful demeanor, languishing accents and alarming readiness to flop in any chair or other substitute for a seat which may be at hand, a third woman with gray locks and consequently a deep sepulchral voice (politely called contralto), a large, fat man who always staggers and sings convivial tunes, and a short, thick man who always frowns and mutters mysterious threats about what he will do in the third act, and you have the population of a good old opera town, with profile houses right and left and a church lifting a spire of paint frame Gothic into a sky border of distemper blue.

You can tell in a minute what is going to happen. The young woman with the teeth and the glacial utterance is going to beguile the weak minded youth with the high pitched voice, the other young woman is going to flood the stage with tears because she cannot get this matrimonial prize, the deep throated female is going to launch a mother's curse at some one, the convivial person is going to keep us from falling asleep when things get too serious and the threatening fellow is going to turn out to be a discarded lover, and by insinuating a long knife between the ribs of the weak minded youth bring him and the opera to a successful finish.

In this particular case all this goes on in Brussels in the immediate neighborhood of the Grand Place—you can see the Hotel de Ville and the guild houses—and the seductive young woman is the daughter of a drunken innkeeper. Hence the title "Princesse D'Auberge." The incidents of the opera proceed directly and simply. In the first act the temptress, egged on by an unsuccessful suitor for the weeping daughter, induces Merlyn, the weak minded youth, to take a drink.

That starts him on a career of dissipation. In the second act, aided by the melancholy tactics of the lachrymose girl, he tries to reform, but Merlyn, the suitor for the Rita, the temptress, has her eye on another. Rita herself arrives on the scene and of course carries off the weak one. The second scene shows Rita and Merlyn figuring as monarchs of the carnival.

The third act takes place inside the auberge. Every one seems to be bent on paying off Rita. Finally Rabe, the temptress, starts a general quarrel, in the midst of which he arranges an interesting knife duel with Merlyn, with which no one interferes, otherwise the opera could never end. But it does end amid general weeping and choral lamentations in the minor mode.

The music of this opera is merely operatic. That it is melodious nearly all the time is unquestionable, but that it has profound delineative expressiveness or even musical eloquence is a matter admitting of larger doubt. The most interesting pages of the score are those which deal not with the tragedy which is going on before us but rather with its accessories. The drunken songs of Rabe the innkeeper—one of them in the third act, couched in folksong idiom—the choruses and dance of the gayly spectacular carnival, again echoing the people's music of olden time, are the most spontaneous inventions of the composer's fancy.

The treatment of the serious dialogue, such as that between Rabe and Rita, or the investiture of Rabe's bitter reflections on his ill treatment, the utterance of Merlyn's high sounding resolutions and the liping of Rita's amorous whispers—all these are written in an idiom as old at least as *Mithras*. It has stood the test of time and Mr. Blockx writes in it with ease.

This music, fluent, theatrically effective in a limited manner and certainly singable, is deficient in characterization. It is well made, but it lacks emotional distinction. Rabe, Rita, Reinilde, Marcuss—all sing in the same style. Only Rita, with his folk song echoes, has a musical individuality. The communication of the thought and feeling of the leading actors in this drama has to be made chiefly by the vocal energy and physical activities of the impersonators. The music does not inspire them; they must breathe into it the breath of their life.

In the hands of a competent company of singers, however, the work must have no small measure of effectiveness. It has all the necessary paraphernalia, as already described. The variety in the superficial traits of the score ought to please the public fancy. The pictures are engaging to the eye, and combined with the lighter measures of the score they continually offer relief to the more sombre episodes. The last act contains the composer's best thought. Here indeed he has gone far toward finding the true embodiment of the tragedy, and the opera comes to an effective and an affecting conclusion. Thus, once more does music triumph over the ancient formulas of opera, and Jan Blockx get a wreath of laurels at the same time as Mr. Hammerstein has mounted that from generosity. The scenes are good, the costumes pleasing, the groupings picturesque, the carnival a riot of color and movement. This carnival scene made a great success with last night's audience and the finale had to be repeated. The

cast was generally competent. Miss Labia as Rita, Miss Zepilli as Reinilde, Mme. Germaine-Réache as the mother, Mr. Gilbert as Rabe, Mr. Dufranne as Rabe and Mr. Crabbe as Marcus deserve commendation. Mr. Valles displayed neither the voice nor the style to make the declamatory phrases of Merlyn carry across the footlights. But he took the part at very short notice after two other tenors refused it.

NEW SOPRANO HEARD.

Metropolitan Audience Finds Joy in "Trovatore" Even Without Caruso.

The production of "Il Trovatore" at the Metropolitan Opera House last night served to present a soprano new to New York, Miss Ester Adaberto, who is, however, well known on the Pacific Coast.

Miss Adaberto's singing aroused no great enthusiasm from the large audience. The enthusiasm, sure to be present somewhere on an "Il Trovatore" night, found a vent in an ovation to Pasquale Amato, who sang the role of the Count. The Caruso hungry crowd, disappointed by the indisposition notice posted in the lobby, as eager for some one to cheer took it all out on Mr. Amato, who after the second act got more recalls than the most exacting could demand.

NEWS OF PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Mr. Mantell to Appear Next Week in Repertoire.

Robert Mantell's production of "King John" will be seen at the New Amsterdam Theatre for this week only. His repertoire for next week is: Monday, "Macbeth"; Tuesday, "Hamlet"; Wednesday, "Macbeth"; Wednesday night, "The Merchant of Venice"; Thursday, "The Merchant of Venice"; Friday, "Othello"; Saturday, "Macbeth"; Sunday, "The Merchant of Venice"; and Saturday night, "Macbeth."

A professional matinee of "A Stubborn Ciderella" will be given at the Broadway Theatre to-morrow. The audience of players will be seated in the balcony.

The 25th performance of James Forbes' comedy "The Traveling Salesman" will be celebrated to-night at the Gaiety Theatre.

Klaw & Erlanger obtained yesterday from Channing Pollock the rights of a new play to be finished for early production next season entitled "The Right to Happiness." The piece deals with the modern tendency to individualism, and is opposed to the thought of the greatest good of the greatest number.

It has been decided not to bring Henrietta Croaman in her new comedy, "Sham," into New York this spring. Arrangements have been made for Miss Croaman to open here in the fall with unlimited time.

Charles Frohman has called his New York office this in view of the success of John Galsworthy's play, "Strife," which has just been produced at the Duke of York's Theatre for a series of matinees, has accepted from Mr. Galsworthy. The new manuscript is entitled "Thrift," and is in the nature of a sequel to Mr. Galsworthy's play "Strife." Mr. Frohman will produce "Thrift" later in the season.

Thomas Thorne has been engaged by Harrison Grey Fiske for the part of Roger in "The Gay Life," Roy McCordell's comedy, which will have its hearing here early in April.

Washington Society Notes.

WASHINGTON, March 10.—Senator and Mrs. Leidor Rayner of Baltimore entertained at dinner this evening in honor of the Japanese Ambassador and Baroness Takahira in the pink ballroom at Raucher's. Among the other guests were Secretary of State and Mrs. Knox, the Brazilian Ambassador and Mme. Nabuco, the Belgian Minister and Baroness Monechur, the Argentine Minister and Mme. Portela, the Cuban Minister and Mrs. De Quesada, the Swiss Minister, Dr. Vogel, and Rear Admiral and Mrs. De. The British Ambassador and Mrs. Bryce left Washington this evening for a trip to the Pacific Coast.

Mrs. John Callan O'Loughlin, wife of the former Assistant Secretary of State, entertained at luncheon to-day in honor of Baroness Takahira, wife of the Japanese Ambassador.

Robert B. Beardsley, the former Secretary of State, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Martha Bacon, and Miss Edith Simpkins, have gone to Aiken, S. C., for an outing of several weeks.

The Seagoers.

Sailing to-day by the Hamburg-American liner Deutschland for Plymouth, Cherbourg and Bremen:

Mr. and Mrs. Townsend Rushmore, Mr. and Mrs. William S. Shaw, Robert Jordan, Mr. and Mrs. B. Tappan Fairchild, Prince de Lyner, Mr. and Mrs. Ward Ames and Marquis G. Sommi Picenardi.

Sailing by the Bermuda-Atlantic steamship Prince George for Bermuda:

Mrs. H. T. Beardsley, the Rev. Lee R. Burrows, Mrs. Edward Crommelin, Walter Wilcox Burdette, Mr. and Mrs. Glen H. Burdette, Mrs. E. J. Johnson, Mr. Arthur M. Potter, E. Ward Blaisdell and Mrs. G. H. Hallitt.

Passenger by the North German Lloyd steamship Onestien for Bremen:

William Meyer, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smalley, August Theisen and Mrs. Walter Meissner.

Benefit for St. Ignatius Parochial School. St. Ignatius Loyola Church will give an entertainment on St. Patrick's night, March 17, at 8 P. M., in the school hall, 44 East Eighty-fourth street. The committee has arranged for the appearance of the Irish impersonator, Miss Kathleen Mathew, a grandniece of Father Mathew, the lecturer. The proceeds will be donated to St. Ignatius parochial school. Tickets can be had at the rectory, 980 Park avenue.

Cook-Erway.

LYRAIA, March 10.—In the presence of many of their classmates and friends who had been sympathetic observers of their romance, Miss Grace Erway, Cornell '09, of Trumansburg, and George Tandy Cook, Cornell '08, of Canton Ohio, one of the most popular athletes that have ever worn the "C," were married this afternoon at the home of the bride. Three hundred guests were present.

Miss Erway, who is one of the most popular and best looking coeds of Syracuse, was attended by twelve bridesmaids, all chosen from her own class. They were dressed in white, and wore the traditional veil. The bridegroom walked up the aisle beneath arches of amilies which the bridesmaids carried. The ceremony of the young couple left on a wedding journey and later they will live in Kentucky, where Cook is employed as a mechanical engineer.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, author of "In This Our World" and "Woman and Economics," starts the audiences that listen to her with her declarations that woman is only the slave of man. In a recent address she compared man's life partner to his horse, declaring that in either case the head of the household is the measure of the oats. In spite of Mrs. Gilman's argument to the contrary the audience, nearly all women, voted, "Resolved, A married woman is not supported by her husband."

"Old Friends," by William Winter, is a book of literary reminiscences, full of anecdotes and illustrated with personal letters. Mr. Winter came into literature under the auspices of Longfellow, whom he knew as no person now living knew him. In his youth he listened to Webster, Everett, Choate and Parker. He was contemporaneous with Phillips, Sumner and Burlingame. He knew intimately Holmes, Curtis, Stoddard, Stedman, Arnold, Dickens, Lowell, Aldrich, Louise Chandler Moulton, Harriet Kimball, Lucy Larcom, Mrs. Stoddard. Many of these and others not mentioned appear in this record of remarkable friendships which will be published next month.

The writer of "Our Immortality" opens his book with the following paragraph: "There are three loves that make and keep the world—the love that binds man and woman into one flesh and soul, the love that draws families into nations, the love that holds the world to God. Each love is justified in its own immortality."

Mr. William Hamilton Osborne, the author of "The Red Mouse," which has taken its place among the "best sellers," is a lawyer by profession. He began writing stories about six years ago on account of a series of articles on short story writing by an unknown author. His first story was accepted, and as he is a rapid and ready writer he has turned out many stories for the magazines. He rarely changes his work once it is started and is now to complete a story of 5,000 words in one afternoon. "The Red Mouse" is his first long novel.

In the latest list of best selling novels during the last month "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" stands at the top, "Peter" follows, and after these come "Septimus," "Lewis Rand," "The Missioner" and "The Red Mouse." New York "up-towns" is still reading "Septimus" and New York "downtown" makes "Tono Bungay" the first favorite. In Los Angeles and San Francisco "Septimus" heads the list, but down in New Orleans they are still struggling with "The Testing of Diana Mallory," and in Philadelphia they are loyal to Dr. Mitchell and are reading still his story of "The Red City."

"Nature's Help to Happiness," by John Warren Achorn, M. D., is a plea for the cultivation in middle life of a taste for the enjoyments of the earth as a haven of happiness in later life. The author is a believer in hobbies. "Man is artificial in the middle period of life," he says, "and primal at both ends." "As children we played in the dirt and were healthier for it; as old men we should return to the soil."

Mr. J. M. Barrie has received an honorary degree from Edinburgh University. He has already received a similar compliment from St. Andrews University. In "An Edinburgh Eleven" the Scotch writer sketched half a dozen of the professors of that city.

Under the title of "Psyche's Task" a discourse by Prof. J. G. Frazer will be published "concerning the influence of superstition on the growth of institutions." The book is "an attempt to sort out the seeds of good from the heap of evil which we call superstition, just as Psyche was given the task of sorting out the different kinds of seeds." The subjects dealt with are: Government, Private Property, Marriage, and Respect for Human Life.

The first publication of the letter written by Edwin Booth to his close friend Gen. Badeau immediately after the death of Lincoln will appear in the April Century. "For the first time since the damnable intelligence stunned . . . am I able to write" is the opening sentence of this pathetic document. The original letter, which is dated Boston, April 16, 1865, and was mailed in New York the following day, is owned by William H. Lambert of Philadelphia. From this letter may be learned the fact that Booth's first vote for President was cast for Abraham Lincoln.

"Life's Day," William Seaman Bainbridge's new book, which will be published around Easter time, is another of the books at present so popular dealing with mental and physical health. The author takes up the various important periods of life in their chronological order and gives practical advice for the maintenance of a good mental and physical condition throughout "Life's Day."

A new edition of Oscar Wilde's poems will be published next month and will contain a life of Oscar Wilde by Temple Scott. The poems have been newly collected and arranged. A second volume, containing the plays, will probably appear in the autumn.

"The Perfume of the Lady in Black," Gaston Leroux's new detective story, which was postponed on account of the number of advance orders, introduces the characters figuring in "The Mystery of the Yellow Room." The same hero, Joseph Rouletabre, dominates both stories. He is a young reporter whose sagacity solves the mystery and startles the readers. "The Perfume of the Lady in Black" begins where most romances end—with a wedding.

Robert W. Chambers's new novel, "Special Messenger," will be published this week. The story is described as "an episode of the civil war," and the heroine is a girl of Southern lineage and Northern training who enters the Union service as a scout and messenger.

Miss Clara Benedict has a volume of stories ready for publication called "A Remembrance and Other Stories." Some of the tales have appeared in the leading magazines, but others have not been published. Miss Benedict is a niece of Mrs. Constance Fenimore Woolson.

Catulle Mendès, the veteran poet, novelist and dramatist, who was killed accidentally by falling from a train near Paris recently, showed no signs of impaired intellectual powers, although he was nearly 80. He started the *Revue Fantastique* when he was only 18, and his career affords another striking instance of the close connection in France between journalism, literature and public life. The moment the clever Frenchman becomes a journalist and signs

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EDITOR ROOSEVELT AT WORK.

Come to Town With the Commuters and Breaks in as a Straphanger.

Theodore Roosevelt came in from Oyster Bay yesterday to begin work on his new job as an assistant editor of the Outlook. He got to the East Thirty-fourth street ferry at 9:25 o'clock with a lot of other Long Island commuters and was quickly initiated as a straphanger on a crowded crostown car. Miss Cornelia Landon, a friend of Miss Ethel Roosevelt, who accompanied the ex-President to the city, was also compelled to stand up.

After a visit to the home of Douglas Robinson Mr. Roosevelt was met there by Dr. Lyman Abbott in a taxicab and was taken down to the Outlook office in the United Charities Building. Dr. Abbott introduced Mr. Roosevelt to the members of the office here whom he had not met previously. Then the new editor settled himself in his three small rooms on the seventh floor. Fourth avenue side of the building, and told reporters once more that he is a private citizen and is not being interviewed.

Mr. Roosevelt had luncheon with a number of his fellow workers at the National Arts Club. Spencer Trask, president of the club, and Douglas Robinson were also at the luncheon.

Oyster Bay, L. I., March 10.—Colonel and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt will receive their friends and neighbors of Oyster Bay village on Friday evening at 8:30 o'clock at the town hall. They will be assisted by the clergymen of the village, who will be of the receiving party. Colonel and Mrs. Roosevelt will stand inside the rail in the Justice's court room in the town hall and their friends will file past and greet and be greeted by the receiving party.

Lindsay-Cameron Wedding on March 18.

WASHINGTON, March 10.—The marriage of Miss Martha Cameron, daughter of former Senator Don Cameron of Pennsylvania, to the Hon. Roland Lindsay of England, son of the Earl of Crawford, will take place on March 18. It will be a simple wedding owing to the mourning of the bride's mother. The ceremony will be performed in the home of the bride's parents on Lafayette Square. Mr. Lindsay was formerly attached to the British Embassy in this city and is now in the Foreign Office in London.

Lost:

Japanese Schoolboy has lost \$1.50, which he loves very much, because it has been a long time in the family. This money may be recognized by its careworn expression. Persons finding such riches will return it and owner will be very much surprised. Or else they can keep it and buy one copy "Letters of a Japanese Schoolboy" and have such spasm of jolly screams, they will forget how dishonest they are. No answer is expected.

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